

The political economy of corridors, commercialisation and agrarian change in eastern Africa

Ian Scoones

IESE Panel, Maputo, 19 September 2017



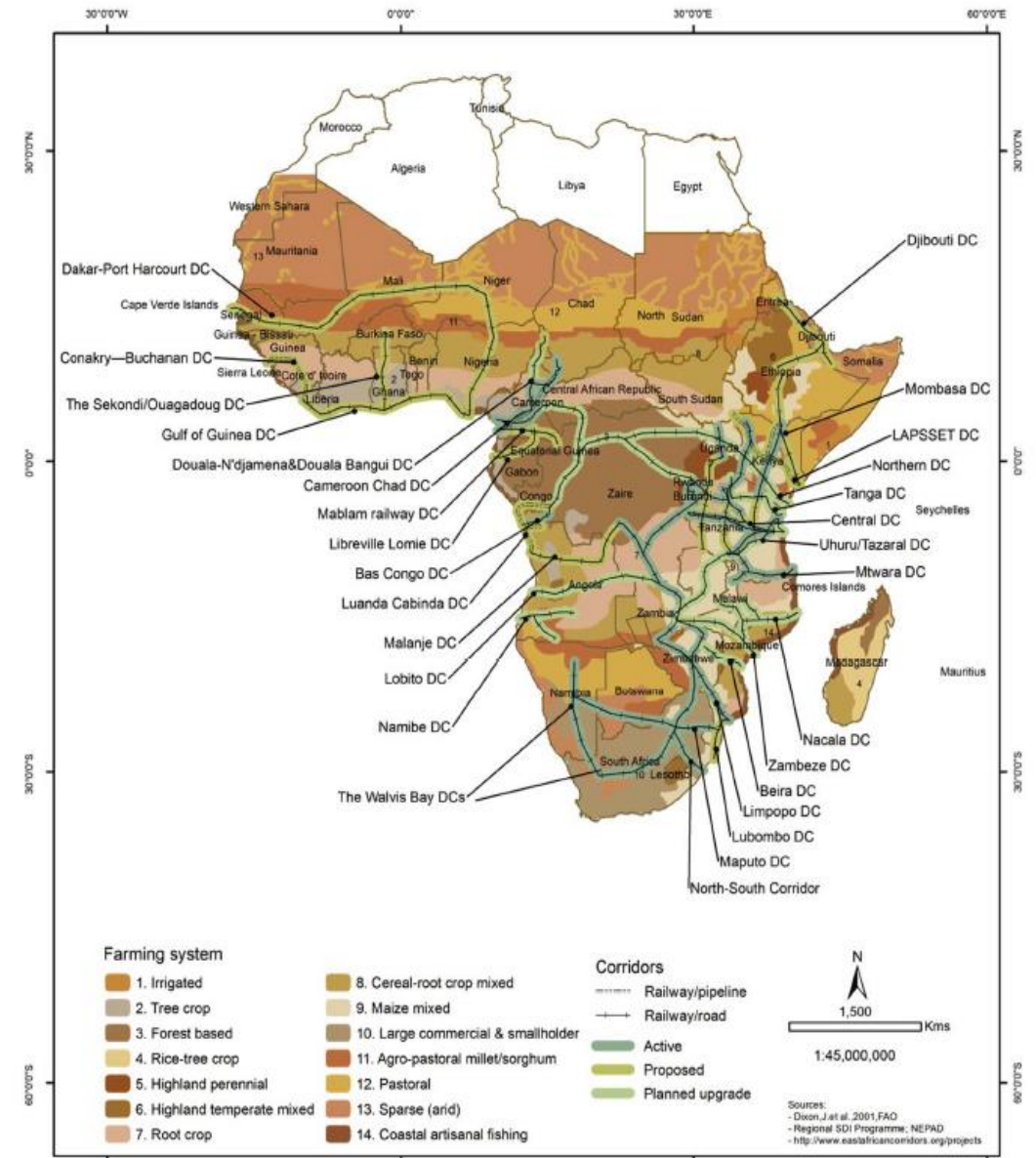
Corridors

Spatially concentrated economic activity along transport route, linking ports with hinterlands

Mining and export agriculture

Focus for investors, PPPs, state plans

Many actors: NEPAD, G8 New Alliance, Grow Africa, AfDB, DFID, JICA. Plus China, Brazil, SA etc. Yara, Olam, Syngenta etc.



Question – social and political dynamics

How are investment corridors reshaping agricultural commercialisation pathways and rural livelihoods in marginal, frontier areas, with what impacts for whom?

Cases

- Lamu Port and Lamu-Southern Sudan-Ethiopia Transport (LAPSSET) Corridor, Kenya
- Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor (SAGCOT), Tanzania
- Beira Agricultural Growth Corridor Initiative (BAGCI) and Nacala Corridor, Mozambique

	Nacala (Mozambique)	Beira (Mozambique)	SAGCOT (Tanzania)	LAPSSET (Kenya)
Corridor type	Agricultural growth corridor	Agricultural growth corridor	Agricultural growth corridor	Economic corridor with secondary agriculture
Locations in main port country	Nampula, Niassa, Zambezia provinces, Mozambique	Manica, Sofala, Tete provinces, Mozambique	Iringa, Mbeya, Morogoro regions, Tanzania	Lamu, Garissa, Marsabit, Isiolo, Meru, Turkana, Samburu, Baringo and Laikipia counties, Kenya
Underlying objectives	Commercialisation and rehabilitation of agriculture, support of mining industry	Commercialisation and rehabilitation of agriculture, support of mining industry	Fertiliser sales (Yara, ACT); sugar expansion; increase foreign investment	Regional trade and economic development, infrastructure, energy security
Influences and narratives	Breadbasket, Cerrado, Brazilian mining firms	Breadbasket, Cerrado, 'empty' arable land, mining firms	Green revolution, export agriculture	Trade and development
Donors	JICA. Brazil	DFID, Norad, World Bank (PROIRRI), JICA	DFID, WB, EU, USAID	AfDB, WB, EU, Development Bank of South Africa
Anchor project	Coal mining	Coal mining	Building on long-term sugar production	Oil pipeline (although changes), infrastructure (port, road, airport)

Narratives

- Transforming ‘backward’ frontiers and hinterlands
- Generating export opportunities, with ‘pro-poor’ benefits (linkages, multipliers)
- Creating ‘breadbasket’ zones for food security
- Partnerships between state and business, attracting FDI
- Orderly spatial planning for development: spatial imaginaries
- Generating economic growth and so improving state control and security

‘Seeing like a state’

‘Seeing like a corporate investor’

‘Seeing like a local smallholder, pastoralist, fisher....’

Politics and interests

- The politics of extractivism: the role of the 'anchor' investment?
- What underlies state-capital 'partnerships'? Who benefits?
- 'Aid' for business opportunities driving projects?
- What opportunities for local accumulation by elites?
- Domestic politics (security and borderlands)?
- Cross-border politics and regional geopolitics?

The political economy of agricultural growth corridors: some first thoughts

- Neither state-driven 'high modernism' (Scott) nor enclave capitalism (Ferguson), but context-specific hybrid dynamic.
- Endogenous capital and dynamics of accumulation crucial: diverting, upsetting, recasting grand plans and investments.
- Contested visions of 'development' and 'progress' being played out, challenging and reconfiguring authority, with tensions and contradictions among elite alliances.
- The everyday politics of corridors: contentious local politics (and resistances) intersect with wider corridor politics, influencing outcomes.
- Who wins and who loses depends on terms of incorporation, predicated on both contemporary politics, but also long-run historical antecedents.